

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 05613 290656Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 SP-02 OES-09 NASA-01 PM-05
NSC-05 SS-15 /085 W
-----001085 291916Z /47

R 290645Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8079
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMCONSUL MUNICH

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TSPA, GE, UR
SUBJECT: GDR SPACE FLIGHT

REF: BERLIN 5500.

1. GDR MEDIA HAVE PULLED OUT ALL STOPS IN THEIR COVERAGE
OF "THE FIRST GERMAN IN SPACE, A CITIZEN OF THE GDR."
SPECIAL EDITIONS OF NEUES DEUTSCHLAND AND OTHER DAILIES
HAVE BEEN DEVOTED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO THE SPACE SHOT
AND GDR TELEVISION AND RADIO BROADCASTS HAVE BEEN FILLED
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WITH NEWS OF THE EVENT AND PREPARED MATERIAL ON THE GDR
COSMONAUT. THE ANNOUNCEMENT ON TELEVISION AND RADIO
ON SATURDAY WAS THE FIRST OFFICIAL INDICATION TO THE GDR
PUBLIC THAT THE EVENT WAS TO TAKE PLACE. DESPITE THE
FACT THAT IT WAS KEPT UNDER WRAPS, THERE HAD CLEARLY BEEN
AN IMMENSE AMOUNT OF ADVANCE PREPARATION FOR THE ENSUING
PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN. KIOSKS WERE BLAZONED WITH POSTERS

ACCALIMING THE ACHIEVEMENT EVEN BEFORE THE LINK-UP WITH SALUT 6. INTERESTED READERS AND VIEWERS ARE BEING PRESENTED WITH A CONSTANT FLOW OF INFORMATION AND FEATURE MATERIAL ON THE GDR COSMONAUT SIGMUND JAEHN AND ON THE SPACE PROGRAM. ON SUNDAY, THE EARLY EVENING TV CHILDREN'S SHOW CONCERNED THE EXPLOITS OF PUPPET COSMONAUTS WEARING GDR AND SOVIET EMBLEMS. THE GDR MINT HAS STRUCK A SPECIAL MEDAL WHICH WAS BEING SOLD IN EAST BERLIN ALONG WITH POSTERS AND OTHER MOMENTOS.

2. WHILE MUCH OF THE MEDIA COVERAGE HAS CONCENTRATED ON THE FRATERNAL COOPERATION WITH THE SOVIET UNION WHICH MADE THIS GDR EXPLOIT POSSIBLE, THE INITIAL EMPHASIS IN THE TREATMENT IS THAT THE FIRST GERMAN IN SPACE IS FROM THE GDR. THIS WAS THE POINT THAT MOST HEADLINE WRITERS MADE IN THE SPECIAL EDITIONS THAT CAME OUT LATE SATURDAY EVENING.

3. IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO GIVE A CLEAR SENSE OF GRASS-ROOTS EAST GERMAN FEELINGS ON THIS EVENT. HOWEVER, ONE OF THE POSTERS ACCLAIMING THE SPACE SHOT HAD BEEN DEFACED WITHIN HOURS OF ITS POSTING BY RIPPING OFF THE PICTURE OF THE SOVIET COSMONAUT WHILE LEAVING THE PICTURE OF THE EAST GERMAN IN PLACE. BOLEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, SPACE FLIGHT, SPACE PROGRAMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BERLIN05613
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780352-1130
Format: TEL
From: BERLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780810/aaaaaifi.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b8b98457-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 BERLIN 5500
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1539609
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GDR SPACE FLIGHT
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TSPA, GC, UR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b8b98457-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014